

Career Choice among Dental Students and Freshly Graduated Dentists.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Aim and Objective: To assess career choice among dental students and freshly graduated dentists. **Methods:** To assess the career choice among dental students and freshly graduated dentists, a structured questionnaire consisting of 19 closed end questions were prepared and sent to 750 people who included exam going final year BDS students, interns and freshly graduated dentists from various dental colleges in Telangana. This questionnaire was prepared and sent using Google Forms through E-mail and WhatsApp and the participants were asked to submit the response in 15 days. A total Of 515 responses were received in 15 days. Google forms automatically tabulate the submitted responses in pie diagrams. **Results:** The results show interesting points and highlight some significant findings on the career choice among dental students and freshly graduated dentists. **Conclusion:** Many students interest has been improved after joining the course. Majority of the participants are interested in continuing in the field of dentistry. Most of the students are willing to join certificate courses after BDS. Most of the dentists are showing interest to work in corporate hospitals.

Keywords: Career choice, Dentists, Google forms.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern day world saw dentistry travel from being just a subset of science of medicine to a branch with its own subsets. From oral health to oral surgery, its travel left its own imprint in the field of medicine by surpassing the usual boundary of just curing to giving importance to esthetics.

However, there is a naive notion among students that career prospective in dentistry are slim and thus many are attracted to non-core fields.

A survey in this context was conducted to read the budding minds and the study was an attempt to know the career choice, perceptions regarding dental education among dental students, interns and freshly graduated dentists.

MATERIALS & METHODS

A waiver of institutional Ethical committee (IEC) was taken before conducting this study.

The study design was a cross-sectional study conducted among exam going final year BDS students, interns and freshly graduated dentists, covering various dental colleges in Telangana.

Table 1: Shows number of participants from different colleges to whom the questionnaire was sent and the number of responses received.

S.no	Name of the college	Questionnaire sent to number of students	Responses received from participants
1.	Kamineni institute of dental sciences	150	138
2.	Panineeya dental college	150	89
3.	MNR dental college	150	94
4.	Meghana dental college	150	98
5.	SVS dental college	150	96
	Total	750	515

Questionnaire design:

A structured questionnaire consisting of 19 closed-end questions were framed.

These 19 questions were prepared in Google forms. Google forms is a tool that is part of Google drive for creating surveys,^[1] tests, or web input forms and the information is then collected and automatically

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connected to a spreadsheet and where we can track the results and post it on the web without having to know programming and analysing the data.

The questionnaire was sent to 750 participants who included both exam going final BDS students, interns and freshly graduated dentists of various colleges in Telangana through E-mail and WhatsApp. The participants were asked to respond to the questionnaire in 15 days.

At the end of 15 days, 506 responses were received in google forms.

Statistical analysis:

All the submitted responses from the participants were automatically analysed statistically by the google forms in the form of Bar diagrams.

RESULTS

A staggering 96 % people were not interested in Dentistry before joining BDS. However, 33 % of the participants reported that their interest on dentistry increased after joining BDS. 88 % of the participants in the study told that want to continue in dentistry and the remaining 12 % want to leave dentistry.

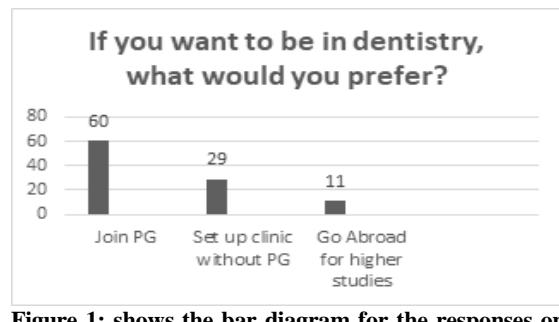


Figure 1: shows the bar diagram for the responses on 'If you want to be in dentistry, what would you prefer.'

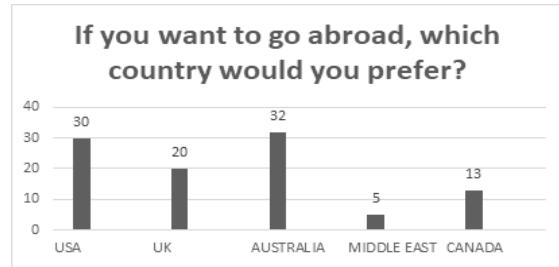


Figure-2 shows the bar diagram for the responses on If you want to go abroad, which country would you prefer?

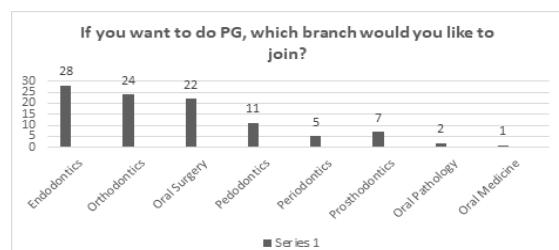


Figure 3: shows the bar diagram with percentage of people interested to join in different branches.

When the participants were asked to report the reason for going abroad, 74 % told for further studies in dentistry and 18% reported that they will join Non-Dentistry courses and the remaining 8% for job opportunities.

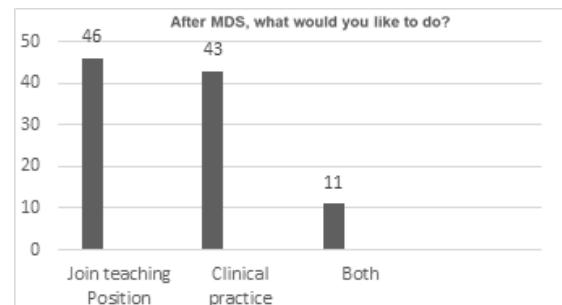


Figure 4: shows the bar diagram with percentage of people intended to do after MDS.

When the participants were asked whether they are interested in doing any certificate courses in dentistry after BDS, 75 % students showed interest in joining certificate courses.

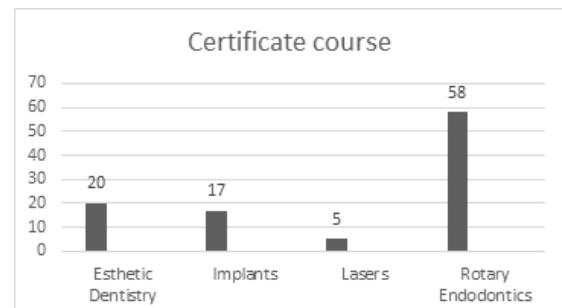


Figure 5: shows the details about the details of certificate courses.

After BDS, 65 % people are expecting to earn more than 20000 immediately after BDS. 30 % are expecting to earn between 10000-20000 and 5% are expecting less than 10000 rupees. When the participants were asked, If you want to move out of dentistry, what they would like to do. 61 % reported that they will work in Government service, 29% participants told that they will do business and remaining 10 % told they will do any other job.

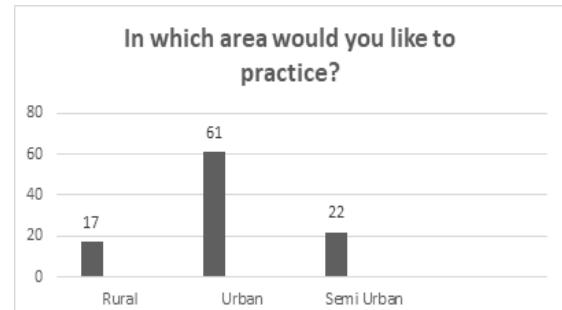


Figure 6: shows the number of participants of the study, interested to practice in Rural Urban and Semi Urban areas.

39 % people want to start their own practice, whereas 42 % wants to work in corporate dental hospital and remaining 19% want to do group practice. 65% participants were ready to work 8-10 hours a day, whereas 19 % were ready to work for 8 hours, 12 % for 10-12 hours and remaining 4 % are ready to work for more than 12 hours per day. When it came to work for number of days in a week, 59% were ready to work for 7 days. 23 % for 6 days and remaining 18 % for 5 days a week.

Only 18 % participants of this survey were interested in doing a MBBS, if bridge course is introduced after BDS. 62% of the participants told Yes, if they were given option, of doing research in Material Science after BDS.

DISCUSSION

The fact that dentistry was not a 1st option for students was revealed when 69% admitted that it is by chance, not by choice they landed into dentistry. However, there was an improved passion for the subject in the course of study. This might have been due to positive influence by the surrounding environment, good teaching during the course and recognition of importance of the subject. Ahmed et al,^[2] in an study investigated the factors that influence the career selection choice of the student and create a possible alignment between their preferences and the institutions curriculum and offerings. The study results are indicative of the importance of students counselling sessions and other interventions to provide them with updated knowledge, and information to create their interest in the right choices and available options. The career choice of the students is also influenced by the level of their social class, financial resources, affordability and future employability.

Alexander et al,^[3] investigated for its association with the career choice decisions was “ease of subject” that was found to have insignificant relation with the career choice decision in this study. The earlier research studies also did not provide sufficient evidence to establish the relationship of ease of subject with the career choice decision.^[4-7]

Many participants prefer pursuing higher studies in the subject, because it helps in improving their clinical knowledge and helps in their career growth, as most of the patients prefer to visit highly qualified and specialized dentist. 28% of participants expressed their interest to set up a clinic right after BDS. Most dentists take time to set up a clinic, as it is expensive to start their own practice right after BDS. 30% of students showed their interest to go abroad for higher studies because of better opportunities, standard of living and more awareness among people in some countries.

28% of the respondents of the study preferred Endodontics as their choice in PG, while orthodontics stood next to it with 24%. It could be

perhaps because of the demand that is preceived. The present study revealed that 46% of the respondents prefers teaching and 11 together with clinical practice as a choice after MDS. That may be due to the fact that teaching profession improves the dignity and professional status.

It is alarming that about 75% of students expressed their willingness to join certificate courses in dentistry after BDS. This might be due to insufficient training imparted during the 5 years of curriculum. The regulatory bodies like DCI, Universities should take a note of this to alter the methodology of imparting practical knowledge, to the students in the areas like aesthetic dentistry, implants etc.

With 35 % of the participants expecting not more than 20000 as their income soon after graduation, shows a lowered financial expectation from dentistry as a career. It is known fact that in medical field the starting incomes are low which will gradually increase and goes to peak during 40 and 50 years of age. 61% opined that they would opt for government services, if they have to move out of dentistry. This might be due to their opinion that working in government services is safe and secure.

It could be due to lack of facilities in rural areas 61% preferred working in urban areas. This is disgraceful to 80% of rural people who are more vulnerable and need great access to health facilities. Government should take some initiative to involve dentists in making health care accessible to rural areas by providing more facilities to dentists working in rural areas.

Preference to working in corporate world shows choice for faster income generation while reluctance to the wholesome responsibility. However, 39% of the participants choice for setting up a clinic unveils entrepreneur skills among students. Many are opting to work 8-10 hrs per a day and it depend on their personal interest, age, gender and financial goals.

A 31/2-year bridge course offering MBBS degree after BDS could attract only 18 % of students which proves retention capacity of dentistry.

CONCLUSION

Modern lifestyle of people who are pulled to undisciplined food habits paid least attention to oral health, leading to huge demand for dentistry. Thus, dentistry has become promising in nature and young aspirants are choosing the profession. However, successful career option is driven by individual passion and perspectives.

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